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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20305

14 November 1980

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence
FROM : John N. McMahon
Deputy Director for Operations
SUBJECT : USSR GENERAL STAFF ACADEMY LESSONS : Combat Actions
of Front and Army Aviation when Developing an
Offensive Operation with the Commitment of the
Front's Second Echelon to Battle

1. The enclosed Intelligence Information Special Report is part of a series now in preparation based on a collection of 29 lessons, classified TOP SECRET, prepared in (1977) for use in the Soviet General Staff Academy. The lessons are broken down into two parts: the first 19 lessons deal with the staff preparation of a front offensive operation with conventional and nuclear weapons, the remaining 10 lessons deal with the conduct of an offensive employing conventional weapons at first with a transition to the use of nuclear weapons. This report is a translation of the lesson outlining the tasks and resources of a front air army in supporting the first two days of battle in an operation against NATO's invading Northern Army Group. The main tasks are to reconnoiter for and destroy NATO's missile/nuclear means and to support and cover front ground forces.

2. Because the source of this report is extremely sensitive, this document should be handled on a strict need-to-know basis within recipient agencies.

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John N. McMahon

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Intelligence Information Special Report

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COUNTRY USSR

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SUBJECT

GENERAL STAFF ACADEMY LESSON No. 22b : Combat Actions of Front and Army Aviation when Developing an Offensive Operation with the Commitment of the Front's Second Echelon to Battle

SOURCE Documentary

Summary:

The following report is a translation from Russian of a lesson, classified TOP SECRET, prepared for use at the General Staff Academy of the Armed Forces of the USSR. This lesson is for the instruction of students acting as the commander of a front air army in sizing up his tasks, assessing the enemy, and making decisions on the first two days of battle against NATO's invading Northern Army Group. The main tasks are to reconnoiter for and destroy NATO's missile/nuclear means, support and cover front ground troops in repelling NATO's advance, delay and destroy advancing NATO reserves, assist in repelling a counterthrust, and support the commitment to battle of the front's second-echelon army for subsequent development of the front offensive. The air army's aircraft and fire-support helicopter strength and capabilities are enumerated. Although this lesson assumes the use of conventional ordnance, the readiness of nuclear weapons is mentioned. End of Summary

Comment:

Although not specifically identified, the colors representing NATO countries in this lesson probably equate as follows:

Brown -- West Germany
Blue -- Great Britain
Lilac -- Belgium
Green -- United States

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Lesson No. 22b

I. Subject : Combat actions of front and army aviation when developing an offensive operation with the commitment of the front's second echelon to battle.

II. Estimated time for the lesson:

- individual preparation of the students -- 2 hours;
- group exercise -- 2 hours.

III. Training objectives: to study with the students the air army's tasks when developing the offensive and committing the front's second echelon to battle.

IV. Method of conducting the lesson -- group exercise with elements of a command-staff exercise.

V. Methodological recommendations on preparing for the lesson:

1. The instructions for the students' lesson preparation are set forth in the assignment for Lesson No. 22b; see section IV of the assignment.

2. When preparing for the lesson, the instructor will study the assignments for Lesson No. 22a with the map and for Lesson No. 22b.

3. In a briefing requested by the students or at the beginning of the lesson, the instructor will state the training topics which must be worked out in the lesson:

- a) sizing up the air army's tasks for 9 and 10 September (15 minutes);
- b) conclusions from an assessment of the enemy (15 minutes);
- c) decision-making by the air army commander on accomplishing the assigned tasks up to the close of 9 September and on 10 September (55 minutes);

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d) He will inform the students:

-- that for the destruction of missile/nuclear means, each bomber and fighter-bomber regiment will have one flight of aircraft in Readiness No. 1 or No. 2 as of 2000 hours 9 September;

-- of the flight resources allocated by the front commander for air support of the army /sic -- armies/ and 2nd Army Corps on 10 September.

VI. Procedure for conducting the lesson:

First training topic: sizing up the air army's tasks up to the close of 9 September and on 10 September -- 15 minutes.

The lesson director will announce: "The operational time is 2015 hours 9 September; the front commander has ordered the 1st Air Army commander to make a report sizing up the assigned tasks." All of the students in the capacity of 1st Air Army commander will make a report sizing up the assigned tasks. When hearing the reports special attention will be paid to the brevity and accuracy of the presentation.

Content of the report -- sizing up the assigned tasks:

-- the content of the combat tasks for 9 and 10 September;

-- when and on the fulfilment of which tasks the main efforts are to be concentrated; matters of air army cooperation with front troops;

-- the forces and means available in the air army for fulfilment of the tasks;

-- the combat capabilities of air large units and separate units to fulfil the tasks.

Report of the 1st Air Army commander (variant)

The Coastal Front commander has assigned the following tasks:

-- by the close of 9 September destroy the detected missile launchers of the 650th and 150th Lance battalions, 24th and 50th Lance missile regiments, and 450th Sergeant Battalion;

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- support the troops of the 4th, 7th, and 9th armies;
- neutralize the operational reserves;
- conduct air reconnaissance of the enemy's missile/nuclear means and reserves.

The air army's flight resources according to its status at 2000 hours up to the close of 9 September are as follows: up to one army sortie of front and army aviation (fighter-bomber aviation -- 6 /number unclear/ regimental sorties; bomber aviation -- 3 regimental sorties; fighter aviation -- 9 regimental sorties; reconnaissance aviation -- 3 regimental sorties; army aviation -- 3 regimental sorties), including for air support of the 4th, 7th, and 9th armies -- one regimental sortie of fighter-bomber aviation and one regimental sortie from each separate fire support helicopter regiment of the 4th, 7th, and 9th armies.

During 10 September, three army sorties of front aviation and 16¹¹ regimental sorties of army aviation will inflict destruction on the Lilac 1st Army Corps, support the commitment to battle of the front's second echelon -- the 6th Army and 2nd Army Corps -- and support the troops of the 4th, 6th, and 7th armies in developing the offensive and the 9th Army's troops in repelling the counterthrust of the Lilac 2nd Army Corps.

The following are allocated for the air support of the armies:

see
p5

Formation	Flight resources	
	Fighter-bomber aviation	Army aviation
4th Army	2 regimental sorties	2 regimental sorties
7th Army	2 regimental sorties	4 regimental sorties
6th Army	4 regimental sorties	5 regimental sorties
2nd Army Corps	1 regimental sortie	2 regimental sorties
9th Army	2 regimental sorties	3 regimental sorties
Total	11 regimental sorties	16 regimental sorties

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When covering the troops, primary attention will be paid to the prevention of enemy air strikes against the battle formations of the forward tank subunits and units of the 6th Army and 2nd Army Corps.

Search and destruction of the enemy's missile/nuclear means, principally Pershing 1-A, Lance, and Sergeant missile launchers, will continue.

The movement of the enemy's reserves forward from the depth and his preparation to employ nuclear weapons is to be detected.

As of dawn on 10 September one flight in each fighter-bomber and bomber regiment will be in readiness to employ nuclear weapons.

Permission has been given to allocate one regimental sortie of the 9th Separate Fire Support Helicopter Regiment to participate in preparatory fire for the commitment to battle of the 6th Army -- the front's second echelon.

Combat tasks in the preparatory fire for the commitment to battle of the front's second echelon will be fulfilled under conditions of close cooperation of fighter-bomber, bomber, and army aviation with the front's rocket troops and artillery, army troops, and air defense troops. The main targets to be struck (neutralized) when supporting the commitment of the front's second-echelon troops to battle will be the enemy counterthrust grouping, primarily its first-echelon large units and units, consisting of the following:

-- the Green 4th Mechanized Division (up to four regimental sorties of fighter-bomber aviation will be allocated for its neutralization);

-- the Lilac 1st Army Corps, consisting of the 1st and 4th motorized infantry divisions (up to ten regimental sorties of fighter-bomber aviation and bomber aviation will be allocated for its neutralization);

-- the 101st Motorized Infantry Division of the Lilac 2nd Army Corps (up to one regimental sortie of fighter-bomber aviation will be allocated to delay its movement forward and for its neutralization);

-- the 2nd Pershing Wing, Lance battalions and Lance missile regiments (650th and 150th, 24th and 50th), and the 450th Sergeant Battalion (up to three regimental sorties of fighter-bomber and bomber aviation and up to one regimental sortie of fighter aviation will be allocated for search and

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destruction of the operational-tactical missile launchers). Two regimental sorties of fighter aviation and one regimental sortie of fighter-bomber aviation will be allocated for the destruction of aircraft (helicopters) at airfields (landing pads).

The air army has in its complement 732 aircraft, including 320 delivery aircraft and 136 fire support helicopters.

The air army is capable of fulfilling the assigned tasks.

The combat capabilities of the air army's air units to fulfil the tasks are as follows:

-- The required combat detail of aircraft for the search and destruction of a Lance battery (two launchers) is up to four to five SU-20 or MIG-23B aircraft, including two aircraft for the battery's destruction and two to three aircraft for the search. A fighter-bomber regiment consisting of 30 aircraft can carry out the search and destruction of up to six Lance batteries;

-- One fighter-bomber regiment (a poligonny /firing range/ detail) can neutralize up to three motorized infantry battalions or destroy up to three motorized infantry companies on the march;

-- One regimental sortie of fire support helicopters (30 helicopters with antitank guided missiles) can destroy up to 30 medium tanks.

In this way, for supporting the commitment of the front's second echelon to battle it will be necessary to allocate the air army's main forces, including:

-- on 9 September, up to seven regimental sorties of fighter-bomber and bomber aviation for delaying the movement forward of the operational reserves and for their neutralization;

-- on 10 September, 10 regimental sorties (6 fighter-bomber; 2 bomber; 2 fighter) for neutralizing the enemy's operational reserves when they are moving forward and deploying for commitment to battle; and 9 regimental sorties (4 fighter-bomber; 3 bomber; 2 fighter) for participation in the preparatory fire for the commitment of the front's second echelon to battle;

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-- four regimental sorties (two fighter-bomber; one bomber; one fighter) for the search and destruction of the operational-tactical missile/nuclear means;

-- three regimental sorties (two fighter; one fighter-bomber) for the destruction of aircraft on airfields (landing strips) in its basing area.

Air army combat actions to delay the movement forward of and destroy the operational reserves are possible at twilight and at night with bomber aviation forces, as well as at dawn and in daylight hours. The air army's readiness to employ nuclear weapons will be increased by activating the on-alert nuclear forces. The individual operational-tactical missile launchers that are detected will be destroyed by the on-alert forces according to the air army's plan.

Second training topic: the conclusions from the assessment of the enemy -- 15 minutes.

Content of the report:

- the general nature of enemy actions;
- the actions of enemy tactical and army aviation;
- the condition of the air defense grouping;
- the condition of the enemy's control and electronic countermeasures system.

Variant of the conclusions from the assessment of the enemy

The enemy's offensive has been halted in the area of the 7th and 9th armies' offensive; simultaneously part of the army forces are successfully developing the offensive on the HANNOVER axis.

On the night of 9 to 10 September, the Lilac 1st Army Corps operational reserves, which are located 60 to 70 kilometers away from the front line, may move forward; the corps may reach the SOLTAU, WALSDRODE deployment line during the hours of darkness, and in cooperation with the Lilac 2nd Army Corps, may deliver a counterthrust from the HANNOVER, SALZGITTER deployment line at dawn on 10 September against the right flank of the 7th Army attack grouping and the left flank of the 9th Army attack grouping on the Coastal Front's main attack axis in the area of the

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commitment to battle of the 6th Army, which is located 90 kilometers away from the front line.

To delay the movement forward of the Lilac 1st Army Corps it will be necessary to inflict destruction upon it, most advisably at twilight (with part of the bomber aviation forces at night), and to destroy the bridges across the WESER and WUMME rivers in the ROTTENBURG /sic -- ROTENBURG/, ACHIM, WALSRÖDE area at dawn. The destruction of the bridges will make it possible to establish a large-scale accumulation and concentration of troops and columns at crossings and on corduroy roads. At dawn on 10 September fighter-bombers with various means of destruction may be effectively employed against these bunched-up and concentrated columns.

Tactical aviation is supporting its troops with many sorties and is employing radio jamming against our radioelectronic means. During the day up to 100 aircraft sorties against one advancing division have been observed. The attacking tank groupings of the 7th and 9th armies are sustaining significant losses from the surprise attacks of light fire support helicopters. It is possible to detect these helicopters at low and extremely low altitudes 15 to 18 kilometers behind the front line (4 to 5 minutes flying time), and /to detect/ aircraft 40 to 50 kilometers behind /the front line/ (2 to 3 minutes flying time). The interception of such air targets is possible only from an airborne alert status; it will therefore be most advisable to carry out the task of covering the troops from air strikes (helicopters and aircraft) in conjunction with the task of delivering fighter-bomber strikes against the tactical aviation airfields and the army aviation landing strips /pads/.

The enemy's air defense grouping has been weakened. However, field air defense means may inflict great damage, especially on fire support helicopters, when our aviation is in action.

It is advisable to carry out flights at low and extremely low altitudes in the area of combat actions. Flights will be made outside the kill zones of the field air defense means -- Chaparral, Vulcan, Red Eye, 40-mm antiaircraft guns, and M-55-4 antiaircraft machinegun mountings -- and they will exploit angles screening battery positions by using terrain irregularities; and flights will be performed on the maximum heading parameter /kursovoy parametr/ from a battery.

Centralized control of the 2nd Allied Tactical Air Force has been disrupted; however, in the combat action areas of the army corps /plural/, control has been maintained by bringing in for control the mobile control

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and warning centers and posts of air defense and tactical aviation, and also control posts of army aviation on aircraft and helicopters. Therefore it is necessary in all flights to provide for the allocation of forces and means for the fire and radioelectronic neutralization of air and air defense control elements; for this it is necessary to bring in electronic countermeasures units of the air army and organize their cooperation with the electronic countermeasures units of the ground troops.

Third training topic: decision-making by the air army commander to accomplish the assigned tasks -- 55 minutes.

Content of the report

The air army commander's concept for accomplishing the tasks:

- a) supporting the destruction of missile/nuclear means;
- b) delaying the movement forward of the operational reserves and neutralizing them;
- c) supporting the commitment of the front's second echelon to battle;
- d) supporting the armies' troops in repelling the enemy's counterattack grouping and developing the front troops' offensive on the HANNOVER axis;
- e) destroying aircraft on airfields (and landing strips) in its basing areas;
- f) conducting air reconnaissance;
- g) allocating the on-alert nuclear forces;

The distribution of flight resources for accomplishment of the tasks.

Report of the air army commander (variant)

In accomplishing the combat tasks, the main efforts of the air army will systematically concentrate on:

- searching for and destroying missile/nuclear means;

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-- supporting the commitment of the front's second echelon to battle by delaying the movement forward of the enemy's operational reserves and destroying them in daylight and darkness, and on having aviation participate in the air preparation for the commitment (of the 6th Army and 2nd Army Corps) with the expenditure of flight resources of up to two army sorties of strike aviation, made up of seven regimental sorties on 9 September and 15 regimental sorties of fighter-bomber and bomber aviation on 10 September;

-- air support in repelling counterthrusts, developing the offensive, covering front troops, and conducting air reconnaissance; to do this, up to the close of 9 September /the air army will do the following/:

-- continue to destroy the detected missile launchers of the 650th and 150th Lance battalions, 24th and 50th Lance regiments, and the 450th Sergeant Battalion with the on-alert air army forces that are in Readiness No. 1 or No. 2 in each fighter-bomber and bomber regiment;

-- continue to provide air support with the flight resources allocated to each first-echelon army on the order of one regimental sortie of fighter-bomber aviation and one regimental sortie of army aviation;

-- delay the movement forward of the Lilac 1st Army Corps before the onset of twilight by delivering strikes on the battalion columns and the bridges across the WESER and WUMME rivers in the ROTTENBURG /sic -- ROTENBURG/, ACHIM, WALSRÖDE area; and continue to deliver strikes at night with five regimental sorties of fighter-bomber aviation and two regimental sorties of bomber aviation;

-- have reconnaissance aircraft discover the starting time and forward movement axis of the Lilac 1st Army Corps.

Before the onset of darkness on 9 September, the 9th Separate Fire Support Helicopter Regiment will be rebased to landing pads of the first-echelon divisions of the 6th Army in order to carry out tasks in support of the 6th Army as of the morning of 10 September.

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During 10 September the main forces of the air army, with three army sorties of front aviation and 16 regimental sorties of army aviation, will assist front troops in developing the offensive, primarily on the HANNOVER axis, and in routing the operational reserves of the Lilac 1st and 2nd army corps, Green 4th Mechanized Division, Brown 1st Army Corps, and Blue 1st Army Corps, for which:

-- the commitment of the front's second echelon to battle will be supported by 15 regimental sorties of fighter-bomber and bomber aviation, four regimental sorties of fighter aviation, and one regimental sortie of army aviation;

-- the armies' troops will be supported when developing the front offensive and repelling the counterthrust of the Lilac 1st and 2nd army corps by 11 regimental sorties of fighter-bomber aviation and 16 regimental sorties of army aviation;

-- the cover of front troops and rear services installations will be reinforced before darkness falls on 9 September and as of dawn on 10 September by continuously keeping up to four flights of fighters in the on-alert zones of each fighter division, and two to four interceptors at night.

As of dawn on 10 September each fighter-bomber and bomber regiment will have one flight in readiness to employ nuclear weapons.

To accomplish the assigned tasks, the flight resources for 10 September will be allocated as follows:

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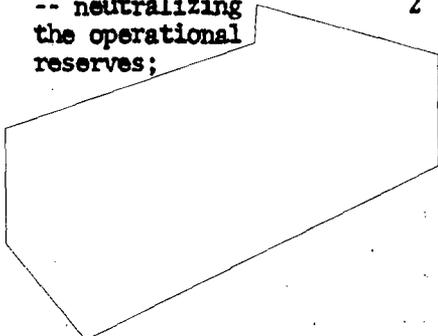
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Tasks	Fighter Aviation	Fighter-Bomber Aviation	Bomber Aviation	Reconnaissance Aviation	Army Aviation
1	2	3	4	5	6
Total regimental sorties on D3 (three army sorties of fighter and fighter-bomber aviation; two army sorties of bomber and reconnaissance aviation; 16 regimental sorties of army aviation)	27	24	6	6	16
Covering the troops and rear services installations of the <u>front</u>	19				
Destruction of missile/nuclear means	1	2	1		
Destruction of aircraft (helicopters) at their basing areas	2	1			
<u>In support of the commitment to battle of the 6th Army and 2nd Army Corps:</u>					
-- neutralizing the operational reserves;	2	6	2		



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1	2	3	4	5	6
-- participating in preparatory fire for the commitment of the second echelon.	2	4	3	--	1*
<u>Air support of the armies, comprising:</u>	1	11	--	--	16
4th Army		2			2
7th Army		2			4
6th Army		4			5*
2nd Army Corps		1			2
9th Army		2			3
Conducting air reconnaissance				6	

Note: *The plan is to draw upon the 9th Army's 9th Separate Fire Support Helicopter Regiment for one of the regimental sorties participating in preparatory fire for the 6th Army's commitment to battle.

Concluding remarks of the instructor -- 5 minutes.

In the concluding remarks the instructor is to summarize the lesson. He will indicate the degree and quality of achievement of the assigned training objectives, and the positive and negative aspects of the students' preparation. He will provide instructions on eliminating shortcomings and brief them on subsequent lessons according to the task of /Lesson/ No. 12.



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